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sources were drawn all the facts marshalled with such skill and explained with such acumen.

The rational approach to the study of the Master-Poet through grammar, archæology and philology was treated with never a lapse into prosiness or conventionality. But the last lecture was the important one. Following FREYTAG, the lecturer analysed with masterly skill and simplicity the evolution of a plot and the relations which the characters and incidents bear to the central idea. The weakness of SHAKESPEARE'S fourth acts was well illustrated; and a hit, a very palpable hit, recorded when the critical foil pricked the body of theatrical realism.

Those of us who consider ourselves average students of SHAKESPEARE have listened to so many clamorous voices raised in windy chorus of theorizing and moralizing, that we were startled and delighted to hear addresses in which elementary facts, and principles, were invested with the grace of novelty, and the glamour of romance. Our "soul hath her content so absolute, that not another comfort like to this succeeds in unknown fate."

ALBERT H. SMYTH.

Philadelphia.

PROFESSOR CURME'S ASSOCIATE EDITORS.

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG NOTES:

SIRS:—Please allow me a few lines to correct an erroneous impression which the reviewer of PROFESSOR CURME'S book seems to entertain with reference to the persons to whom the editor acknowledges his indebtedness. In no proper sense were we associates; for PROFESSOR CURME made his own selections and wrote his introduction without advice or assistance from us. Our work consisted solely, so far as I know, of reading the proofs and making a few marginal corrections and suggestions. It is due to PROFESSOR CURME, as well as to us, that our proper relations should be known, since to consider us all under the misleading caption of associates, would be to deprive him of the praise he very justly deserves for the excellence of his work, and to hold us responsible for any adverse criticism which may attach to it.

Respectfully,

SAMUEL GARNER.

Annapolis, Md.

BRIEF MENTION.

'Ueber den Ursprung der neuenglischen Schriftsprache' (Gebr. Henninger, Heilbronn), by DR. LORENZ MORSEBACH, is an important contribution to English philology. In the popular view the literary or standard English of today received its initial stamp at the hands either of CHAUCER or of WYCLIF. Several years ago PROF. TEN BRINK ('Chaucers Sprache und Verskunst') weighed the evidence of their respective claims to this singular honor, and decided that the influence of the court poet CHAUCER in determining the future destiny of the language, was at most but incidentally aided by the labors of his great theological contemporary. DR. MORSEBACH at this point takes up the problem, and while agreeing with PROF. TEN BRINK in regarding London as the cradle of the language, reduces CHAUCER'S headship to a mere factor in the reënforcement of an assured tendency, and declares: "Auch wenn Chaucer seine unsterblichen Werke nicht geschrieben hätte, so würde die Entwicklung der englischen Schriftsprache ganz denselben Weg genommen haben." This is putting the strongest stress upon the view that the centralizing life at London and at the Court supplied all the conditions necessary for the creation of a uniform standard of speech. To establish this view DR. MORSEBACH proceeds in accordance with exact philological methods. He investigates the London dialect as it has been preserved in the legal State and parliamentary records for the period of fifty years, which extend from the central point in CHAUCER'S career, 1380, onward to the year 1430, and thus discovers a language which, while in the main identical with that of the poet's works, has yet points of difference, and these differences, it is argued, hold the closer relation to modern literary English. Since most of these sources for the English of cultivated Londoners at the time of CHAUCER are not yet published, it is welcome news to be told that DR. MORSEBACH promises soon to publish a volume of them. In the meanwhile his treatise may be regarded as a careful presentation of the facts there revealed, while it also deserves a high place among the most trustworthy contributions both to the history of the language in general, and to the special province of Chaucerian English.

It is seldom that a book has appeared at a